

**In the Claims:**

Claims 1-7 (canceled)

8. (currently amended) A water jet apparatus for severing a biological structure with a jet of severing liquid comprising water, the water jet apparatus comprising

a storage container for the severing liquid,

a piston-cylinder unit comprising

a cylinder formed in a cylinder casing and the cylinder having a wall and a bottom, a piston received in the cylinder casing for reciprocal motion of the piston in the cylinder with space remaining adjacent the bottom of the cylinder, the space functioning as a pressure space upon downstroke of the piston and as a suction space upon upstroke of the piston, and an annular membrane having an inside periphery attached to the cylinder wall at a position in an upper zone of the piston-cylinder unit and an outside periphery attached to the piston at a position in the upper zone of the piston-cylinder unit, the upper zone being defined by an annular space above the suction-pressured space, the membrane sealing interior of the piston-cylinder unit below the membrane from exposure to the ambient outside the piston-cylinder unit and the membrane being dimensioned so as to allow reciprocation of the cylinder and the annular space being dimensioned so as to allow movement of the membrane therein as the piston reciprocates and ~~the~~ to accommodate the membrane when the piston is at rest at end of a downstroke,

a manipulable operating device including an internal pressure tubule terminating in the jet and a suction pipe sheathing the pressure tubule,

a suction line for conducting the severing liquid from the storage container to the suction-pressure space in the cylinder,

a pressure line for conducting the severing liquid from the suction-pressure space in the cylinder to the operating device, and

a coupling for attaching the eccentric drive to and detaching the eccentric drive from the piston,

the piston-cylinder unit together with the suction line, the pressure line and the operating device constituting a sub-assembly ~~which~~, wherein the suction line is attachable to and detachable from the storage container and the cylinder casing by means of a first and a second coupling and the pressure line is attachable and detachable from the manipulable operating device by a third coupling, ~~the eccentric drive by means of the coupling, whereby one such sub-assembly may be replaced with another such sub-assembly.~~

9. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The water jet apparatus according to claim 8, wherein at least a lowermost portion of the annular space tapers inwardly in a downward direction toward the suction-pressured space, the taper being formed by a frustoconical portion of the cylinder wall.

10. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The water jet apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the cylinder casing and the piston are constituted of plastic.

11. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The water jet apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising a protruding sealing lip formed on the cylinder.

12. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The water jet apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising

a connecting device installed in the cylinder for connecting the pressure tube to the suction-pressure space,

a first opening through the cylinder casing,

the connecting device comprising a pressure sleeve press fit into the first opening through the cylinder casing for effecting communication of the pressure line with the suction-pressure space, a pressure tubule concentrically received in the pressure sleeve and having external ribs spaced from an interior wall of the pressure sleeve by a distance corresponding to thickness of a wall of the pressure line, the wall of the pressure line at an end portion of the pressure line being

gripped between the ribs of the pressure tubule and the interior wall of the sleeve.

13. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The water jet apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising  
a second opening through the cylinder casing, the second opening effecting  
communication of the suction line with the suction-pressured space, the first and second opening  
being radially oriented and diametrically opposed with respect to the cylinder whereby the  
connecting device is installable in the first opening by initial insertion thereof through the second  
opening.

14 (new) The water jet apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the suction pipe of the  
manipulable operating device is connected via an exhaust line to a pump.